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THE UNBURIED LEGS.

AN IRISH TRADITION.

In the cool grey of a fine Sunday morning in the month of June, Shoresha Hower (George Howard) dressed out in a *shoot* of clothes, with a pair of runner leather brogues that had never been on man before, set out from his father's little cabin, romantically situated amidst a little group of elder and ash trees, on the banks of the river Flesk, to overtake an early mass in the village of Abbeydorney. Such at least, to the old couple, was represented as the ostensible object of Shoresha's long walk, though they did not fail to hint to one another, with half suppressed smiles, as he closed the door after him, that his views were not altogether limited to the sacred ceremony. What was really uppermost in his thoughts on that auspicious morning, as he brushed along with a light and springing step over heather or tussock—whether the chapel, where he was to kneel by the side of a little blue-eyed, fair-haired devotee, during the service, and the long and digressive exhortation; or the barn of Abbeydorney Cross where he was to commence the evening dance with her, it would be invidious to scrutinize, and was especially of little consequence on this occasion, as both his love and his devotion fell prostrate before a master-feeling which suddenly usurped an absolute command over the events of the day.

As he was trudging along a low monotonous heath-covered country, whistling the old air of *Thau me en u hulla agus dhusig me*,* he came to a high double ditch, covered with blackthorn bushes, with here and there the decaying trunk of an old oak or beech, throwing forth a few weakly shoots, which still waved their slender boughs in the wind, as if almost in mimicry of the mighty arms it once stretched forth over the fields. He looked along the bank, and observing a spot where the ascent was likely to prove easy, caught hold of a branch to assist him in mounting, when he heard a noise at the other side, and rustling among the bushes, as if some one was making his way through. He got his foot on a tuft of rushes in the ditch-side to proceed, when suddenly, with a loud exclamation, he tumbled backward into the field; for what should he see walking upon the top of the ditch, and just preparing to jump down, but two well-shaped middle-sized legs, without either hip, body, or head. It was just as if they had been cut off a little above the knee, and, though there was nothing to connect or regulate their movements, they climbed, jumped, and progressed along the moor, in as well adjusted steps, as if the first dancing master of the county of Kerry had been superintending their movements. They evidently belonged to a man, as appeared, not only from their figure and size, but from the portion of the white kerseymere garment which buckled at the knee, over a neat silk stocking. The shoes were square-toed, of Spanish leather, and were ornamented with old-fashioned silver buckles, such as had not been used in that part of the country for some generations. They had slowly passed by Shoresha, and already left him staring behind, at the distance of a good stone-throw, before he recovered from his astonishment sufficiently to think of rising, which he accomplished slowly, and almost involuntarily, never taking his eyes off the legs, but ejaculating to himself, "Blessed mother in heaven! is it awake or draming I am." They had now got on so far, that he perceived they would be soon out of sight, if he did not move in pursuit; so abandoning Abbeydorney and its inducements, he, without hesitation, adopted that resolution.

It would be vain to detail all the Ohs! the Dhar a dieus! the Monoms! that escaped from Shoresha, time after time, as the legs hopped over a trench, picked their steps through a patch or bog, or pushed through a thicket. He was before long joined by a neighbour who was on his way to Listowel, for the priest to christen his child, but who could not resist the temptation of following and ascertaining how this extraordinary phenomenon should end. A smith, and a little boy who had been despatched to fetch him from the cross-road by a traveller, to get a few nails driven into a loosened shoe, soon after fell in with him. A milk-maid laid down her can and spancill, and some ragged gorseons gave over their early game of gaol, as they came up, and so great were the numbers collected when they approached Listowel, even at that dewy hour of the morning, that it seemed like the congregation of some little village chapel moving along at prayer time.

It was amusing enough when they arrived at the waters of the Flesk, to observe with what delicacy and elegance the legs tripped over it, from stepping stone to stepping stone, without getting spotted or speck on the beautiful silk stockings.

* I am asleep, and don't wake me.

They now cut across the country at a nimble gait, the procession behind lengthening every hour, and increasing in clamorous exclamations of wonder as it proceeded.

After some hard walking, they descended into a wooded glen, where the tangled underwood, and wild briar, and close and stopping branches of the alder timber, rendered it no pleasant travelling to such as were under the heavy disadvantage of a superincumbent body. To the subjects of our narrative, which were annoyed by no such lumber, of course no difficulties presented themselves; they hopped over the dense brushwood, or ducked under the branchy arms of oak or elm stretched across the path, with equal activity, while the most eager of the crowd behind were eternally knocking their forehead and noses against some unobserved bough, or dragging their tattered clothes through blackthorn and briar; several wearied and fretted with the chase, soon fell behind, while others, seeing no probability of any intermediate termination to it, and although ignorant to what it might lead, gave up in apprehension. A thousand surmises about it were already afloat; some saying, they saw them going to stop once or twice, and that they certainly would not go much farther; others swearing out, that "'twas faster and faster they were walking every moment, and that the dickens a one of 'em would stop or stay until they go to the banks of the Shánnon." Many suggested that "it wasn't they at all that were there, but only, as it were, the shapes of 'em; and that they'd keep going, going, ever, until it was night, and lead 'em all into some wood or desert place; and then may-be the ground to open beneath 'em, or a gush of wind to come by and sweep 'em away into one *gwall*, so that they'd never be heard of after." The legs had, meantime, crossed a shallow part of the river Gale, that stole noiselessly through the bottom of the glen, and pressed on with renewed vigour at the opposite side. A flat, moorish, uninteresting looking country, fell fast behind them; and as they invariably pursued the most direct route to Tarbert, the tired followers, which now consisted chiefly of boys and young men, began in good earnest to suspect that town to be their real destination. They were, however, soon relieved from these disagreeable anticipations, when the legs arrived opposite a place called Newtown-Sands, made a sudden stop, wheeled the toes round to the right, and almost instantly sprang across a little trench; they then advanced rapidly towards the remains of an old church, which are still to be seen there, within one or two fields of the road. There are but three roofless walls now standing; and close to where the west gable formerly stood, is one solitary tree, which in that unwooded and almost uninhabited region, only adds to the universal loneliness. There are a few graves about, but even these are only observable on a very close approach, so buried are they in the long rank grass and weeds, and in the fallen rubbish of the building. To one of these which lay close to the south wall, our heroes moved on, but at a more measured, and it would seem, reverential pace than before; and kneeling slowly down beside it, remained in that position before the wandering eyes of the few who had persevered in the pursuit, and had now, one after another, come up. As their courage grew bolder in contemplating the pacific and holy attitude of the legs, they began gradually to contract their circle, and creep nearer and nearer; but the closer they approach, the more shadowy did the objects become, until the resemblance was only to be distinguished by a fleecy, almost transparent outline, which moment after moment was less defined, and at last melted away into thin air.

Such was the story that occupied the thoughts and tongues of all the gossips from Newton-Sands to Abbeydorney, for months and years after. As the occurrence was in itself quite unique in its kind, even those who pretended to the most intimate communication with the spiritual world, as well as the confessed and best accredited agents of the *gentleman*, were wholly unable to offer any thing like a probable explanation of it. One old blind woman, who was, indeed, the Lord knows how old, and was wrinkled and grey in the memory of the baldest inhabitants of Abbeydorney, called to mind a tale that had been told her when a child, which perhaps may be said to give some clue to it.

"There lived," she said, "in the former times, a lady of immense wealth, who had a strong castle not far from Abbeydorney, though no one could now tell where; and two great lords came to propose for her: one a fair-haired blue-eyed youth, of a delicate make and graceful manner; the other a dark, stout, athletic figure, but proud and uncourtly. The lady liked the fair lad best, which made the other so jealous of him, that he was determined, one way or another, to

compass his death. So he engaged a fellow, by a large sum of money, to get access to his bed-room at night, and cut off his head with a hatchet. On the night the murder was to be committed, he made the lad, who never suspected him, drink more wine than usual after dinner, that he might be wholly incapable of resistance. In this state he retired to his room, where he threw himself on the bed without undressing, and, as it awkwardly enough happened, with his head towards the bed's feet. In a few minutes in came the fellow with the hatchet, and struck a blow that he thought must have severed the head from the body, but it was the two legs he had cut off. Upon this the young lord groaned, and immediately after received another blow, which killed him. The corpse was put into a sack, and carried that night to Newtown-Sands, where it got Christian burial; but the legs were thrown into a hole in the castle garden, and covered up with earth. The lord who had procured the murder, the next day pretended to the lady that the blue-eyed lad had returned home; upon which, not knowing the deceit, she became quite offended, and in a few weeks after agreed to marry his rival. But in the midst of the joy and feasting on the bridal night, there was a horn blown outside the castle, and soon after, steps were heard ascending the grand stair-case, and the door of the bridal-hall flew open, and in walked two bodyless-legs. Then there was screaming, and runnings, and the bride fainted; but the legs followed the bridegroom about every where, until he quitted the castle; and it was said that wherever he looked or turned to, from that hour, he saw them stalking before, or beside, or behind him, until he wasted and fell into a decay. And when he was dying he confessed the whole, and desired the assassin might be searched for every where, to ascertain from him where the legs were thrown, that they might be dug up, and get Christian burial, but the villain was never found from that day to this, and may be," continued the old woman, "the legs are in punishment this way, and get leave to walk the country of an odd time to show what's happening to them, and make some good soul search them out, and have them removed to Newtown-Sands."—*Tales of the Munster Festivals.*

INDIVIDUAL EXERTION.—MR. BIANCONI.

Individual exertion is often far more beneficial in contributing to the welfare of a country than either national expense or legislative bounty. If inquiry be made into the causes of England's prosperity, it will be found that single-handed and individual activity has had a prodigious share in promoting it; and the ingenuity of a Watt and an Arkwright has discovered new sources of wealth, and cut a channel for that current of enterprise which, swelling into a mighty torrent, has enabled Britain to rise far above the nations of the earth. Really, when we hear people complain of the want of national support, we are apt to think that the fable of the Waggoner might be quoted not inappropriately, and "put your shoulder to the wheel," might be whispered in many a murmurer's ear. Now, as we are in a prodigious egotistical mood, we will exemplify this by an example. Our little Journal is unblessed by committee patronage, and unheralded by great names; it has nothing but its own penny trumpet to sound its praises; yet, like Poucet with his seven-leagued boots, it has measured the length and breadth of the land. It is in the hands of the shepherd on the rocks of Magilligan; it is perused by the Kerry man, as he drives home his "tiny cattle," along the sea where frowns Mac Gillicuddy's Reeks; Cork and Belfast, Londonderry and Limerick, Waterford and Wicklow, Westport and Wexford, and every town and village in Ireland, are receiving the Dublin Penny Journal; and Edinburgh, the "modern Athens," the region of Reviews and Magazines, the seat of the Muses, and the very homestead of fancy and philosophy, in whose nostrils a Dublin production was naught, and who would fain write it down that Dublin is "without the pale" of literary enterprise, the very Irish Boetian, is absolutely astonished by the "face of brass" which we have presented! But enough of this for the present.

There is an individual in Ireland, who, though a foreigner, has "done the state some service," and exemplifies in his person what an individual by persevering exertion may do. This gentleman is Mr. CHARLES BIANCONI, a native of Italy. He came into this country as a *print-seller*, and in travelling from village to village, and from town to town, exercising his vocation, he felt, as many a man has felt before him, and may after, how toilsome it is to trudge on foot under a burning

sun, or amid the storms of winter; so he shrewdly bethought him, that if he had a *jaunting-car*, and, of course, an animal to draw it, he might not only save his own body corporate some fatigue, and carry his wares with speed and ease, but by occasionally picking up pedestrians at a small charge, contribute not a little to defray the expenses of his vehicle. For three months his speculation did not display itself as a peculiarly happy one; but by-and-bye he became known, his car became in request, he started a *second* one, then a third, and so on, until he has covered all the roads in the south of Ireland with his cars, which radiating from CLONMEL as a centre, connect the following towns:—

Ballinasloe,	Eyrecoount,	Parsonstown,
Ballyhale,	Fermoy,	Rathcormuck,
Banagher,	Fethard,	Roscrea,
Burrosaleigh,	Freshford,	Ross,
Burrosakane,	Foulk's-mill,	Shinrone,
Caher,	Kilkenny,	Strangford,
Cashel,	Knocktopher,	Stonepound,
Carlow,	Kilmacthomas,	Taghmon,
Carrick,	Kildorrery,	Thurles,
Clogheen,	Limerick,	Tipperary,
Cork,	Littleton,	Templemore,
Dungarvan,	Mallow,	Uringford,
Doneraile,	Mitchelstown,	Watergrass-hill,
Enniscorthy,	Nenagh,	Wexford.

In travelling to these towns Mr. Bianconi has upwards of three hundred horses, gives employment to upwards of one hundred and twenty families, causes a consumption of above nine hundred tons of hay, and twelve hundred barrels of oats, annually, and his cars travel above eighteen hundred miles daily. He is now principal contractor in the South of Ireland for conveying His Majesty's mails on cross roads by cars.

Before Mr. Bianconi established his cars, the travelling vehicles in use were only four-horse coaches, confined to what are termed the mail-coach roads, and the fares were too high for the humbler class of farmers and tradesmen, whose business often calls them from home. Now this enterprising and spirited foreigner has laid open the entire south, and done more good than a host of half resident landlords. A few years ago, to travel in the south of Ireland was an adventure not to be rashly made: now there is free, and easy, and rapid intercourse, and the numerous cross roads are all rendered available, and turned to good account.

Not long ago, in entering Mr. Bianconi's office at Clonmel, in order to procure a seat in one of his cars for Cashel, we were surprised to see the walls covered, not with glaring advertisements, notices of auctions and sheriffs' sales, but with some of the very best prints taken from the works of the great masters. "Why," we muttered to ourselves, "this carman must be a man of taste!" By-and-bye a very comely dark-eyed person came in, and seemed to take an active interest in the affairs of the establishment. This was Mr. Bianconi, and having occasion to address him, we found him polite and affable, and could have wagered a guinea to a groat, that he was born to be a gentleman.

Many stories are told of Mr. Bianconi, which reflect great credit on his head and his heart. For instance, it is said that his drivers have a general order to pick up, free of charge, all pedestrians who evidently cannot pay for a whirl, and who seem to be travelling with pain to themselves. In giving this order, he has shown the gallantry of his country, by specially directing that any female travelling with a child in her arms, should be accommodated with a seat. Moreover, the slightest hint of misconduct on the part of a driver—the least whisper of an accusation, if well-founded, subjects the delinquent to instant dismissal; and so averse are they of this, that the drivers of Bianconi's cars are as civil a set of fellows as you would wish to see handle a whip.

Again, all his horses have names, and these names are regularly inserted in his way bills. In fact, his "dumb brutes" are his pet children; he knows each of them familiarly, and it would not, perhaps, be going too far, to say, *that they know him!* He can tell where they are, whether they are well or sick, how they are behaving themselves, and every thing relative to these "dear children" which the father of so numerous and so well-regulated a family ought to know.

Bravo, Mr. Bianconi, thou art an enterprising, sensible, discreet, and proper person; and if Ireland had many more such foreigners as thou art, she would bless the day they landed on her shores. He has lately obtained letters of naturalization from the government—"CEAD MILE FAILTÉ."